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A

DISSERTATION

ON THE

DESTRUCTION



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SEVEN NATIONS OF CANAAN.

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DISSERTATION

DESCRIPTION



SEVEN NATIONS OF CANADA

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1873

THIS Tract, small in size, but weighty in sense and argument, is calculated to illustrate that part of the sacred volume to which it refers, and to remove the prejudices which some persons have been induced to entertain concerning it. It was first published fifty years since, subjoined to "A Critical and Practical Exposition of the Pentateuch," a learned work of great liberality and merit, printed in 1748, without the name of the Author.

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A
DISSERTATION
ON THE
DESTRUCTION
OF THE
SEVEN NATIONS OF CANAAN.

THIS is a question of so much difficulty and importance, that I shall not take upon me to deliver my own opinion of it, but lay before the reader the most satisfactory account of the matter I have been able to collect from others. Of all the writers I have consulted upon the subject, none appear to have examined into it more accurately and impartially than Dr. Sykes, in his *Connexion of Natural and Revealed Religion*. The substance of what he offers is as follows.

It is granted on all hands, that nothing that is immoral, unjust, or unworthy of God, can proceed from him. If therefore any revelation contains in it any immoral precepts, or duties, or commands, it carries its own condemnation with itself, and all
reasonable

reasonable creatures are bound to reject it. Now this is said to be the case of the Mosaic institution; it not only enjoins human sacrifices, but has likewise commanded such barbarity, such inhumanity towards others, as cannot possibly be owing to so good and merciful a being as God is. Can he require the extirpation of whole nations at once? Can he order that any set of men should be so brutal and barbarous, as to murder whole cities, men, women, and even sucking children? Could he bid any company of men to go any where, and not to *save alive any thing that breatheth, but utterly to destroy all*? To command *human* sacrifices, implies a cruel, malicious, disposition: but to order the sacrifice of *seven whole nations* at once, implies so monstrous a degree of cruelty, as is inconsistent with, nay, a flat contradiction to all our ideas of God. Should therefore any revelation pretend to come from God with such monstrous tenets in it, it requires no consideration, it ought at once to be rejected.

If this is levelled at the *Mosaic institution*, the consequence is clear: for if the law of Moses did enjoin human *sacrifices*, did require such a barbarous extirpation of *whole nations*, it will certainly be impossible to prove its coming from God.

It has been shewn, that the charge of instituting *human sacrifices*, or of the Jews practising any such custom,

custom, is not to be imputed to the law of Moses. See the exposition of Lev. xxvii. 29*.

Nor is that cruelty and barbarity with which God is accused, in ordering the seven nations to be *massacred*, or *destroyed utterly*, to be found in the law.

The words of the law from whence this objection has been raised, are these : Deut. xx. 16, 17. *Of the cities of these people which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth : but thou shalt utterly destroy them, namely the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites*

* The author here refers to his own exposition of a passage, which has been interpreted by some writers as authorizing human sacrifices. The following is an extract of what he says upon it :

None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed; but shall surely be put to death.] From the preceding verses it appears, that Moses is here speaking of a man's so giving a thing, or person, as to design that it should never return to his own use, or to his family; which sort of donation was called *Herem*, devoted to the Lord. And the plain meaning of this verse, which has occasioned a great deal of controversy, is this : *Every thing which is devoted of men shall not be redeemed, but shall surely die*; i. e. Every person which is given in perpetuity, shall not be redeemed, but shall die in that devoted state. For though our version has it; *He shall surely be put to death*; in the original it is only, *dying he shall die*; which is not to be understood of being sacrificed, or put to any violent uncommon death; but he shall not be redeemed, he shall continue, till death, in a devoted state. Thus when God said to Adam, Gen. ii. 17, *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die; or dying thou shalt die*; it is not, thou

naanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. Deut. vii. 2—6. *When the Lord thy God shall deliver them (viz. the seven nations) before thee, thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them, thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them. Neither shalt thou make marriages with them: thy daughter shalt thou not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other Gods: so will the anger of the Lord be*

thou shalt be put to death, but *thou shalt die*. So Num. xxvi. 65; 2 Kings, viii. 10; Ezek. iii. 18. In all which, and many other places, the expression signifies simply *to die*. It being an idiom of the Hebrew language to join together substantives and verbs of the same signification; as is frequently done in the Greek: as in Aristophanes; *Μεμψιν μεμφομαι*. So in the New Testament; *Εφοβηθησαν φοβον*. *Εχαρισσαν χαριν*.

To shew how persons were devoted, or given to the Lord in perpetuity, we have an instance in Samuel, 1 Sam. i. ii. His mother *vowed a vow*, and said, O Lord, If thou wilt give unto thine handmaid a man-child, then will I give him unto the Lord *all the days of his life*. Accordingly when the child was *weaned*, she brought him that he might appear before the Lord, and there *abide for ever*. His mother *vowed him to the Lord for ever* or for life; and Samuel gave his consent, and ratified his mother's donation; which shews both how a person was devoted; and at the same time, that the devoted person was not sacrificed, or made a victim to God.

Thus all the difficulty of these words will be removed, only by interpreting them in a sense which is quite natural and consistent with the whole tenor of scripture.

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kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly. But thus shall ye deal with them: ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. Num. xxxiii. 51—54. Then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places. And ye shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein: for I have given you the land to possess it.

This was the command in the law, and the practice consequent upon it was: When the Israelites attacked Arad the Canaanite, Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said: *If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities.* And the Lord hearkened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites, and they utterly destroyed them and their cities: none was left alive. Num. xxi. 2, 3, 35. And it was much the same in the case of Jericho. *The city shall be accursed, even it and all that are in it, to the Lord, and you in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse and trouble it.* But all the silver and gold, the vessels of brass and iron are holiness unto the Lord; they shall come into the treasures of the Lord. Jos. vi. 17—24. And then follows the story of Achan, ch. vii. and the exemplary punishment taken of him for

for appropriating to himself what was devoted to the Lord.

To set these nations in their true light, I shall consider 1st. The case of the destruction of the seven nations ; and then the nature of the Herem, which does not always imply *destruction*.

1st. 'Tis granted, that the *seven nations* were to be destroyed, and their polity, and form of government, and all power were quite to be put an end to. But this does not imply, as the objection supposes, a *total destruction*, or *putting to death*, of every man, woman and child among them. *The nations* were to be destroyed as *nations*, that is their polity and government was to be destroyed ; but there was not any such massacre as is imagined. And to prove this, it is plain, that neither *Joshua* nor any of the *Judges*, numerous as they were, nor Samuel, nor David, nor Solomon, nor others after him, ever understood these words of the law in such a sense as to imagine that they were obliged to cut off every soul of these nations, whenever they became subject to them. These people, or at least several of the *Amorites*, *Hittites*, *Perizzites*, *Jebusites*, continued quite unto Solomon's days, as appears from 1 Kings, ix. 20, 21, and long after. For the historian observes, *all the people that were left* of the *Amorites*, *Hittites*, *Perizzites*, *Hivites* and

and Jebusites, *which were not of the children of Israel, their children that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel were not able* utterly to destroy : Upon *those* did Solomon levy a tribute of bond-service unto this day. If Solomon, therefore, when he had the people of these nations subject to him, levied only a *tribute of bond-service* upon them, he could not apprehend himself bound by the law of *Moses* to *massacre* them or put them to death. Suppose that the children of Israel were not able to *destroy* these people *before* the days of Solomon, yet when this king had them in subjection, he might have done it instead of making them *tributaries* of money, or of *service* to him : and upon supposition that he was antecedently obliged by the law of Moses, to put them to death, I do not see how he could have changed the command of *death* into a mere *tribute* of service, or money, or both.

2ndly. The case of Uriah the Hittite, 2 Sam. xi. 12, is well known. David's crime in causing him to be *slain* was severely censured, condemned and punished by God himself. Notwithstanding Uriah was of those nations devoted to destruction, yet still David had no right to *murder* him ; nor did the law, that commanded *not to spare any one that breatheth* of the seven nations, justify or excuse the contrivance to take him away.

3dly. One part of the law here given supposes very manifestly, that ALL universally were not to be

be destroyed. For it is said: *Thou shalt not make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give to his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take to thy son.* Deut. vii. 3. Could there possibly be occasion for this injunction, if it be supposed that nothing that *breatheth was to be saved alive*, but all were *utterly to be destroyed*? Must not their sons and daughters have been slain? Or what end would it serve to forbid all *intermarriages* with a people that is supposed not at all to be? I argue,

4thly, *If the known end and reason of the law could be obtained without this absolute destruction of the people*, then it might fairly be concluded that such deletion was not absolutely required, unless it were impossible to attain such end otherwise. A certain *end* is proposed and declared, and this *end* may be obtained by different or various means. You cannot therefore argue, that these people were to be *destroyed* in order to such a given end; because consistent with their not being *destroyed*, that *end* may be secured. This end indeed could not be obtained without the destruction of them, as a polity, or as *nations*; but might very well be secured with their *lives*.

The reason given for this destruction, was—*they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other Gods.* Deut. vii. 4.

If then these nations were to forsake their idolatry, and become converts to the religion of the
Jews,

Jews, they would be then what God required them to be, penitents, and proper objects of forgiveness, and not of punishments. And it is a rule laid down in scripture, and founded in equity; *At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it, if that nation against whom I have pronounced turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil, that I thought to do unto them.* Jer. xviii. 7, 8.

But these people not repenting, but continuing the objects of displeasure, the command was *utterly to destroy their cities*: Deut. xx. 16, 17. And to *smite those nations, and to destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their golden images with fire*: Deut. vii. 2. Whilst they continued bodies *politic*, with power and influence, they might by intermarriage or leagues keep up idolatry: and even when the *nations*, as such, were destroyed, their altars, images, groves, and pictures might tempt men to false worship; and therefore it was not proper to spare even such things. But when the nations were subdued, the surviving captives (made so by right of war) might reject the worship of false Gods; and the occasions of seducing the Jews might be removed, and those very people might be brought to the acknowledgment of the one God; and thus they might be preserved alive, and the reason of the severity be observed, without such cruelty and barbarity

as is supposed. And that this was in fact the case, I argue,

5thly, From the instances of *persons* all along preserved from this great destruction. Rahab and her *father*, and her *mother*, and her *brethren* and all her *kindred*, were preserved alive: not only she herself, who might have pleaded personal merit against the letter of the law, but all her kindred and family were saved from destruction. Now if the law were to be interpreted as implying an unlimited command, in no case, and in no circumstances, to *save alive any thing that breatheth* of those seven nations, neither could the spies have promised, to *deal kindly and truly with her*, nor could Joshua without a manifest breach of the law, have performed the promise which they had made. Jos. ii. 14; vi. 22.

So again we find it particularly remarked in Joshua, ch. xvi. 10, that the *children* of Israel *drove out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer, but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites* unto this day, *and serve under tribute*. So likewise it is remarked, Jud. i. 25, concerning the city of *Bethel*, when the house of *Joseph* took it, they let a man and his family, that shewed them the way into the city, *go free*. Again, ver. 28, *It came to pass when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute and did not utterly drive them out*. And 'tis observed, that neither did *Ephraim* drive out the
Canaan-

Canaanites in Gezer nor *Asher* drive them out in many places : and as to *Zebulon* and *Napthali*, and the house of *Joseph*, *they made the Canaanites and the Amorites* become tributaries to them : ver. 27—35. Since therefore neither *David* with all his power, nor *Solomon*, did destroy these people ; since they subsisted in the country from the days of *Moses* upwards of *four hundred and fourscore years* ; and since they were so far subdued as to become *tributaries of service*, as well as of *money* ; and since they might therefore have been absolutely destroyed because conquered, and yet were kept alive—Hence I argue, that these people were not to be absolutely and entirely cut off, men, women, and children, without any mercy and compassion ; but only that they were to be destroyed *as nations*, and that if they submitted, and became subject to the *Jews*, and relinquished their idolatry, they were not to be deprived of life. For did none of the *Jews* in all this time understand the command ? Did none to their generals, or successful warriors, understand their business was absolutely to *destroy* all these people ? Had they no opportunity ? Had they no power not when they made them tributaries ? was *Joshua*, was *Samuel*, was *David*, such a stranger to the law ?

But what then is the meaning of those words—Thou shalt *save alive* nothing that *breatheth*, but thou shalt *utterly destroy* them ?

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The answer is—The *seven* nations were the peculiar people whose land the Jews were to take possession of ; and in whose place they were to dwell. They were to be routed quite, to make way for these new inhabitants : in course therefore they, as nations, were to be destroyed, and all power was to be taken from them ; and they were so far to be conquered, and reduced, as not to have it in their power to teach the *Israclites to do after their abominations which they had done to their Gods*, so as to make them sin against *the Lord*. No alliance was to be made with them ; no treaty of peace was to be concerted ; no peace was to be proclaimed unto them : But they were to be pursued and smitten without mercy, that the Israelites might have the inheritance which had been all along promised unto them. With other nations or cities, peace and alliances might be made, but not with these. If a war arose between the Jews, and any other state or city which was not of the seven nations, and such city stood a siege, they were first to proclaim peace unto it ; and if the city were willing to become *tributary* to them, it was to be accepted ; if it stood the siege, and would not accept the terms proposed, and it afterwards was taken, then its *males* were to be slain, but not the *women and children*. Deut. xx. 10—15. *But of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God hath given thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save nothing alive that breatheth : v. 16.*

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With the seven nations the case was not to be the same as with those people that were remote from them: But if a city stood a siege, and put the issue upon their courage and fortitude, then all were to be destroyed; not *only males* but *females* and children. But then if they did submit themselves, the law does not enjoin that the males and females and every thing that breatheth shall be destroyed; but they might have their lives, and the *nation* only as such, was to be destroyed. This difference was to be made betwixt the *seven nations* and all *other cities*: in case of refusal to surrender, all were to be destroyed, *men, women, and children, every thing that breatheth* among the seven nations: among others in like case of refusal, only the *males* were to suffer: But at all adventures, those nations were to have all power and dominion taken from them, and they were to be subverted: and thus will the law and the subsequent history be reconciled.

The Hivites were certainly one of the seven nations, with whom no league ought to have been made; yet by their art, Joshua made peace with them, and made a league, upon the condition which they themselves offered; *We are your servants*: Josh. ix. 11, 15. In the event of things *there was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites. For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly and that they might*

might have no FAVOUR, but that he might *destroy* them, as the Lord commanded Moses : Josh. xi. 11 —20. The conclusion hence seems very natural, that as they chose to oppose themselves, and try their success in battle, and would not surrender, nor accept any offer of submission, they were *cut off*. But then had they submitted, and surrendered themselves up, they might have had FAVOUR, though they were not to have been received *as allies* or friends, whereby they might have had a power to make Israel sin against God. *For if thou serve their Gods, it will surely be a snare to thee.* See Exod. xxiii. 32, 33 ; Deut. vii. 4.

It may be said, and Le Clerc has urged it, that “ The words of the law are very express, (Deut. xx. 15, 16,) where the seven nations are excepted, so as not to be reckoned among those who were to have their lives, if they surrendered themselves up. Besides there is a great difference between a law which commands a people utterly to be destroyed, lest they should entice those that spared them to idolatry, (which is the case of the seven nations,) and a law which commands a people to be utterly destroyed, unless they become tributary, and embrace the religion of their superiors. Had Moses intended this latter case, he would certainly have expressed his mind clearly in those places, where he mentions
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the command to destroy the Canaanites ; and it was a case which deserved the utmost clearness, and the Jews ought to have had it inculcated over and over." See Le Clerc on Deut. vii. 2.

But it is in fact in this, as it is in many other cases, writers express themselves in their own manner ; and the intelligent reader is forced to be at the pains of searching and comparing many passages, if he will have the exact knowledge of almost any point. Practice will often determine the meaning of an obscure law : and in the present case, we have instances for five hundred years together, of what the Jews did to those very nations ; which is a comment sufficient to shew us, how they understood their law.

" But," says Mr. Le Clerc, " what signifies it to make many words ? This was the nature and obligation of the vow which the Hebrews call Herem, that enemies devoted in that form were to be slain. See Lev. xxvii. 29. And the seven nations of Canaan were so devoted."

It appears sufficiently that the law in Leviticus here referred to, does not relate to *putting to death* any *devoted* person, nor is there any instance of any person *devoted to the Lord* who ever was, in virtue of being *devoted*, *put to death*. See this confirmed in the note, page 7, 8. and consequently
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this excellent commentator was mistaken in this point.

In order to remove the foundation of this charge, it is necessary to have an exact notion of the meaning of the word *Herem*, and to what that word is applied in the *Old Testament*. My author has therefore produced all the places where that word is used, and shewn its different senses. He observes that the word *Haran* in the Arabic tongue, signifies *to forbid, to be unlawful*; and the substantive from it, *a thing prohibited*. This he takes to be the original meaning of the word. Agreeably to which derivation it signifies in the books of the law, 1st. a thing absolutely *prohibited*, such as an idol, or the gold of an idol. As, (Deut. vii. 26,) *Thou shalt utterly detest it; for it is HEREM, a cursed thing; i. e. a thing absolutely prohibited*. 2nd. Because what was unlawful was not to be kept, or used, it came to signify in general, *to destroy*; and 3dly, to destroy without mercy. So in that fore-cited Deut. vii. 26; *Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be HEREM*; i. e. a thing to be destroyed *like that*. Exod. xxii. 20, *He that sacrificeth to any God, save unto the Lord only, shall be UTTERLY DESTROYED*; i. e. *he shall certainly be put to death without favor, or mercy*. 4thly, Because that was declared unlawful to be used, which was given to the Lord, and what was given in perpetuity, could not be redeemed; hence what

was

was devoted to the Lord, in this manner, had the name of Herem. Lev. xxvii. 21, The field when it goeth out in jubilee, shall be holy to the Lord, as a field devoted; the possession shall be the priests; i. e. it could never be redeemed by the proprietor, but was to continue the possession of the priests for ever. Here devoted, signifies absolutely given in perpetuity to the Lord. Hence, 5thly, it signifies what was appointed to destruction by God. Isa. xi. 15, The Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea. So ch. xxxiv. 2, 5, in which places it is applied as an act of God himself to destroy things as well as persons. 6thly, Whatever was forfeited or addicted to the sacred treasury, by way of punishment, was called Herem. Ezra, x. 8. A proclamation was made, that whosoever would not come within three days, all his substance should be forfeited. 7thly, From the general signification to destroy, instruments of destruction to fish and beasts, viz. Nets, were called by the name Herem. Ecclef. vii. 26, And I find more bitter than death, a woman whose heart is snares and nets, HERAMIM. 8thly, Because people that merited destruction were justly liable to reproach and contumely, though they were not destroyed, they are called Herem. Isa. xliii. 28, Therefore I have profaned the princes of the sanctuary, and have given Jacob to the curse, to Herem, and Israel to reproaches. In this place Herem doth not seem to signify a total destruction, but

but *abuse, contempt, contumely*, consistent with their being *not destroyed*.

From which passages it appears, that there is not the least foundation, in word or thing, to imagine, that persons given to the Lord, or *devoted* by Herem, were ever slain, or made sacrifices of. Thus far Dr. Sykes.

To what has been said, it may be added, that the extirpation of the Canaanites appears to have been pre-determined in the councils of heaven. See Gen. ix. 25, 26, 27. Yet their national wickedness, was the only cause of their national ruin. For notwithstanding the assurance given to Abraham, that his posterity should be settled in the room of the Canaanites, it is expressly declared that this event should not take place for many generations, and *till the iniquity of those nations should be full*; Gen. xv. 16; that is, till their incorrigible wickedness had baffled all the gentler methods of providence, which, during the course of some hundred years had been employed for their reformation. For 'tis agreeable to the procedure of a benevolent Deity, in similar instances, first to use the milder means of mercy and forbearance towards a people, to see if they can be reformed upon the principles of filial love, gratitude, and generous remorse; but
if

f instead of being reformed by these methods of indulgence and forbearance, they only become *hardened*, presumptuous and insensible to all motives of honour and generosity, then the sword of justice awakes to strike the long suspended blow.

Now it appears from all historical records of these seven Canaanitish nations, that before they were given up to utter desolation, they were sunk into the deepest degeneracy. For not to rest upon the authority of Sanchoniathon, who takes notice of their universal corruption both in principle and practice, particularly of their giving up their most favourite children, in times of public calamity, to appease the wrath of their blood-thirsty demons; we have the same account of their national depravity in the more authentic records of scripture-history. Thus in the xviii. chapter of Leviticus, where the Israelites are cautioned against the commission of several enormous crimes, such as *offering their children to Moloch, lying with mankind, as with women kind, lying with beasts, and women standing before beasts to lye down thereto*; it is added, *For in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you.* And again. *For all these abominations have the men of this land done, which were before you.* Thus it appears that the destined period for their extirpation was arrived; their *iniquities were full*, and they brought down this desolation upon themselves.

And

And then the extirpation of this people, so sunk in idolatry and wickedness, was a most awful and instructive example to the Jews, for such was the proneness of the Jews themselves, in that age of the world, to idolatry, that nothing less seemed effectual to restrain them from it, than to impress them with the most horrid idea of that crime, as what rendered men accursed in the eyes of God and man. For which cause the idolatrous nations whose lands were given them in possession, were destined to be utterly extirpated from the face of the earth as a race of execrable monsters.

But it is argued, Why did not God punish the Canaanites for their iniquities with his own hand, by unfruitful seasons, for example, or pestilential distempers? Answer, Unfruitful seasons, pestilence, and the like, were interpreted common accidents, or to proceed from the displeasure of their demons, and so abused, to give strength to idolatry, rather than to root it out. But when God is pleased to give a commission to a people professing the worship of the only true God, in opposition to all idols; when it should appear that this one true God had granted the land of Canaan to this people, and given them possession of it, with many visible marks of supreme power, and maintained them in their possession, against all the powers of those idols, in whom the Canaanites trusted; you immediately perceive

perceive a standing *confutation* of the hopes of idolaters, and a standing encouragement to the hopes of the Hebrews, and of all other worshippers of the one true God.

Yet there still remains, some say, an unanswerable objection, that such an example will encourage *enthusiasts* and *impostors*, to invade their neighbours, to pretend religion whenever they have a mind to their estates.

But the extraordinary commission to the Israelites for extirpating the Canaanites, can justify none to imitate the example, but such as shall be in like circumstances with the Jews, and who shall receive a like real commission, as well, and as fully attested as the Hebrews had. The punishment which they inflicted upon idolaters, was grounded upon an express particular command from God, given them at a time when they were under a severe law, and under a *political theocracy*, even with respect to their civil government; and therefore can be no precedent for us, whose circumstances are quite different from theirs. See Lowman *On the Civil Government of the Hebrews*.

To which we may add, that it is impious and absurd so much as to suppose Christians capable of receiving any such commission as that of the Jews now in question; and that, because it is repugnant to the very genius and essential principles of Christianity. The Christian religion inspires nothing but

but love and peace, and universal benevolence. The weapons of the Christian warfare, which we are authorised to employ, are not *fire* and *sword*, and desolation, but the spiritual weapons of argument and persuasion, the soft inviting motives of forbearance, condescension, and instruction in meekness. Our religion allows us to hold no man, or nation of men, unclean or abhorred; but on the contrary teaches, that in Jesus Christ, there is neither *Jew* nor *Gentile*, but that in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him. Our Saviour sufficiently intimates how opposite a spirit of bigotry and persecution is to the spirit of Christianity, by rebuking his disciples, who would have called for fire from heaven to have consumed the Samaritans, for rejecting him and his doctrine. *Ye know not of what manner of spirit ye are of; for the son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.*

And after he had foretold the persecutions that should arise in the times of Christianity, when bigots should arrive at such a height of blind zeal, as to imagine they did God good service, when they put their fellow creatures to death on account of difference in religion, he adds, *These things will they do, because they have neither known me, nor my Father;* i. e. because they have neither known the principles of Christianity, nor of natural religion. Therefore if ever the example of the Jews extirpating the idolatrous

latrous Canaanites, has been pleaded by any who called themselves Christians, as in that war, known by the name of the *holy war*, wherein the Christian powers combined together to exterminate the Saracens out of the holy land; and in those persecutions, known by the name of the *Crusades*, which the crafty Popes raised upon the same principles against Hereticks as well as Infidels, alledging it was as much for the glory of God to extirpate heresy as infidelity; all such pretensions must have been either downright imposture, or enthusiasm.

To conclude, should any professed Christian pretend a commission from God, to propagate religion by violence and persecution; should he even vouch miracles, and prophecies fulfilled in attestation of that commission, he would deserve as little regard as a Jewish prophet or wonder-worker, who sought to seduce the Israelites from their allegiance to the true God. Deut. xiii. 1. For idol worship is not more opposite to the Jewish religion, than persecution is to the spirit of Christianity.

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 pretend a commission from God, to propagate re-
 ligion by violence and persecution; should he over-
 reach his mission, and be killed in execution
 of that commission, he would deserve as little regard
 as a Jewish prophet or wonder-worker, who sought
 to seduce the Israelites from their allegiance to the
 true God. Deut. xiii. 1. For idol worship is not
 more opposite to the Jewish religion, than per-
 secution is to the spirit of Christianity.

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